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VOL. III NO. 31 FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1948. Price 20 Cents

Did Not See Signal

Edinburgh, Feb. 5.—The crash of the Edinburgh-King's Cross express at Goswick, Northumberland, on October 26 when 28 people were killed and 97 injured, was largely because the driver, Thomas Begbie, did not observe a distant signal on the line, declared Lieutenant Colonel Wilson, chairman of the resumed inquiry in Edinburgh.

"Nor do I think you tried to observe it," he told Begbie. "You kept hoping you would see it and you did not."

Begbie said that the "distant" signal was obscured by smoke and steam. When he looked for it at Goswick the home signal was off. He took it for granted that it was safe to go on.

A sailor, Leading Stoker Redden, an acquaintance of Begbie's, had been given permission by him to travel on the footplate. Of his presence, Lieutenant Colonel Wilson said: "I find it very difficult to dissociate the presence of an unauthorised man on the footplate in a serious breach of regulations from circumstances in which the accident occurred."—Reuter.

De Valera May Lose Majority

Dublin, Feb. 5.—Fire general election figures, so far tonight indicate that the Prime Minister, Mr. Eamon de Valera, will not have a clear Parliamentary majority but will secure possibly up to 70 seats. This would be a four short of a clear majority.

His party, the Fianna Fail, held 77 seats before yesterday's polling. The election is expected to return six or seven members from other parties in the Dail (Lower House of Parliament), who would be prepared to support Fianna Fail. Nevertheless, the margin between the Government and the Opposition looks like being narrowed.

Features of the election have been the failure of the Republicans, who have been expected to be the main opposition party, whose position in the Dail may not show any material change. The party had 30 seats in the last House.

The Labour Party, which had nine seats in the last Dail, is not doing well and is not expected to improve its position.

The state of the parties at 9 p.m. GMT was: Fianna Fail 15, Fine Gael six, Republicans three, Labour three, Independent Farmers one.—Reuter.

HUNDREDS OF HINDUS ARRESTED

Police Round Up Members Of Outlawed Organisation

EARLY MORNING SWOOP IN BOMBAY

Bombay, Feb. 5.—Before dawn today, squads of armed and uniformed police arrested in their hundreds members of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, the militant Hindu volunteer organisation, throughout the Greater Bombay area.

By 6 a.m. local time, it was estimated that 300 people, including a number of prominent members of the extremist Hindu Mahasabha, had been rounded up and kept under lock and key.

Among the latter were Mr. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, a former President of the Hindu Mahasabha, Mr. A. H. Cadre, President of the Bombay Provincial Mahasabha, and Mr. M. Talpade, the Vice-President. Also taken into custody was Mr. Jannadas Mehta, formerly a prominent Member of Congress and latterly an adherent of the Hindu Mahasabha.

Elaborate precautions had been taken to prevent disorders and the arrests were completed with clockwork smoothness a few hours after the authorisation was flashed from Delhi.

Unofficial estimates said today's arrests brought the total of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Mahasabha members detained since the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi to nearly 700 throughout India.

The police were said to have seized certain documents from the residence of Mr. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar.

While the arrests were being made, the police also searched premises belonging to RSS and Mahasabha members and the office of Prabhat, a pro-Mahasabha newspaper.

Similar action was being taken throughout Bombay Province, according to the authorities here.

Mr. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, who is 65, was President of the Hindu Mahasabha for nearly a decade until he resigned in 1946 on account of ill-health.

He survived 14 years' transportation in the Andamans penal settlement in connection with a political conspiracy. He was later interned in India and released in 1937.

LABOUR LEADER

Mr. Mehta, who is 64, has a long record as a labour leader. He was a member of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress in 1926 and Minister of Revenue and Finance of the Bombay Government in 1937.

From 1944 to June, 1946, he was India's representative with the Burmese Government.

Twenty RSS men were arrested today in Poona, regarded as the main centre of the organisation's activities, when the police made an early morning swoop on houses and offices there.

Among the arrested was Mr. N. G. Abhyankar, described as a provincial organiser of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. The arrests and searches are continuing in Poona.

Five arrests were made in Surat, about 150 miles north of Bombay, and reports from Bezwada, South India, said two RSS men had been taken into custody by the railway police as they were about to board a train for Nagpur.

The police roundup in the Greater Bombay area ceased shortly after noon, local time, but searches continued.

Reports from Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, recorded similar searches although not on the same scale as in Bombay, which, with Poona, has been one of the strongholds of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

It was impossible to give an accurate computation of the total arrests throughout the Dominion, but it was believed that the end-of-the-day figure would not be short of 1,000, and might exceed that figure.

The Mysore State authorities, falling in line with the Indian Government's ban on the RSS, in Bangalore today arrested Rao Joshi Jadhav, described as "General Officer Commanding of the RSS" in Karnataka.

Suryanarayana Rao, described as "General Officer Commanding of the

RSS" in Mysore State, was also arrested.—Reuter.

LUCKNOW CORDONED OFF

New Delhi, Feb. 5.—Military and civil police today cordoned Lucknow while intelligence officers questioned visitors in the search for Hindu militants wanted for questioning in connection with the murder of Mr. Gandhi.

Throughout India, armed police searched towns and villages for agents of the militant Hindu organisation banned by the Indian Government yesterday. Hundreds of arrests—some unofficial estimates said 1,000—were made.

About 300 people were arrested in Bombay, 104 in Delhi, 30 in Lucknow, 13 in Madras and 75 in the United Provinces. These were the minimum figures.

Most of these arrested were released after questioning, a Bombay spokesman said.

Hundreds of people continued to visit Birla House, where Mr. Gandhi was assassinated, and the Raj Ghat, where he was cremated.

The latest stories of how people were affected by the shock of Mr. Gandhi's death concerned a Sadhu (a Hindu holy man) who committed suicide, a merchant who went mad and a man named Godse—the surname of the man held for trial on charges of murdering the Mahatma—who changed his name to Gandhi.—Reuter.

H.K.—JAPAN AIR LINE

London, Feb. 5.—The extension of the British Overseas Airways Corporation's operations from Hongkong to Japan will, it is hoped, be made in the near future, Mr. George Lindgren, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, told a questioner in the House of Commons yesterday.

He added that ultimately, when adequate technical facilities could be made available, it was proposed that the service should terminate at Tokyo.

Meanwhile, it was proposed to terminate the service at Iwakuni.—Reuter.

H. K. And Japan Peace Treaty

Commons Questions

London, Feb. 5.—The Prime Minister, Mr. Clement Attlee, told the House of Commons today that, wherever it was desirable and feasible, the colonial governments directly concerned with the Japanese peace settlement would be invited to attach advisers to the British delegations in future talks.

Mr. William Teeling, who recently returned from a visit to the Far East, had asked the Prime Minister why the Hongkong Government was not represented at the Canberra talks on a peace treaty with Japan.

He also wanted to know whether, "as the Foreign Office is not equipped to put Hongkong's point of view," the colony would be more adequately represented at any further peace talks.

Mr. Attlee replied: "The purpose of these talks was an informal exchange of views on broad lines and without commitment between the Commonwealth Ministers."

COLONY'S INTERESTS

"The interests of Hongkong, as of other Far Eastern colonial territories, were represented by the United Kingdom delegation."

"The United Kingdom delegation, at meetings of this kind, do not represent any single department of the British Government, and it is their normal responsibility to represent the interests of the colonial empire equally with those of the United Kingdom."

"In any further conferences concerned with the Japanese peace settlement, we shall naturally continue to discharge this responsibility, but, wherever it is desirable and feasible to do so, we shall be glad to invite the colonial governments directly concerned to attach advisers to the United Kingdom delegation."—Reuter.

\$500 Million Aid To China Plan Proposed

RELIEF SUPPLIES FOR 15 MONTHS

Washington, Feb. 5.—Aid for China, totalling about \$500 million, is proposed in a State Department plan prepared for the National Advisory Council, the United States policy-making body in the field of finance, a Council spokesman confirmed today.

This estimate—which may be changed somewhat either by the National Advisory Council or by the Bureau of Budget before reaching Congress—is somewhat higher than the original tentative figures given to Congress by Mr. George Marshall, the Secretary of State, nearly three months ago.

At that time, he spoke for a \$300 million programme to run for 15 months.

The \$500 million project is likely to run for about the same period. American officials said this programme was not comparable to the European recovery programme.

The assistance to be sent under it would be mainly of the relief type, to last for 15 months, but it was hoped that supplies made available would help in stabilising the situation so that a long range plan might be substituted later.

The programme may be submitted to Congress within the next week or two.

New York Stock Market Slump

Sudden Rush To Sell

New York, Feb. 5.—Wall Street blamed "Washington" and the fear of further European currency devaluations for yesterday's price drop in the American stock and commodity markets—which was the biggest drop for over a year.

From coast to coast, people rushed to sell their holdings, wiping out about \$1,000 million in the market valuations of stocks.

Sales totalling over one million shares and stock quotations in the New York Exchanges dropped one dollar to an extreme of five dollars per share.

Since Christmas, the index of sensitive commodity prices in the United States has slumped from over 400 to less than 435. Nearly eight months of that decline occurred yesterday alone.

Everybody—supposed—thai—the French free market would register a distrust of some currencies against the dollar. What it has, in fact, registered is a distrust of all currencies, including the dollar against gold.

GOLD COINS PREMIUM

Yesterday, the first day that gold trading in Paris became legal, the prices of gold coins there reached premiums of exactly 100 percent over the free market price of the dollar.

Wall Street has seen a slump coming for some time. In relation to the profits they are making, prices of American shares on Wall Street today fell below the worst ratios of the 1931 slump.

Since November, the prices of United States Government bonds on Wall Street have been pegged only by continuous and very expensive financial support, which has been taking the huge sum of about \$500 million per week, and the President of the New York Federal Reserve Bank stated last week that if the support were withdrawn, the bottom would fall out of the market.—Reuter.

EDITORIAL

Gun-Toting Desperadoes

WEDNESDAY'S gun battle in the Western District is another grim reminder that Hongkong continues to be afflicted with the presence of criminals as desperate in character as any of the notorious old-time Chicago gangsters. And the audacious challenge to the authority of the police made by these heavily armed men is a sobering indication of the utter contempt for law, order, or life held by these types. There is this consolation: a gang of thugs has been effectively broken up. One died in vain defiance of the police; two others were wounded and will, it is presumed, due course be charged; one only, so far as can be ascertained, managed to escape. Another measure of satisfaction to be derived from the grim drama is that the bravado of the criminals was more than matched by the gallantry of the police officers who shot it out with the gunmen with skill and determination. Sub-Inspector Dempsey and Detective-Sergeant Wong Fuk were wounded in line of duty, but they, together with the remainder of the Chinese and European officers who took part, have good reason to congratulate themselves on the successful outcome of the fray, while the public will gain comfort and confidence from the knowledge that our policemen are more than a match for the most militant desperadoes. The Yu Lok Lane gun battle serves to bring into sharp focus the heavy responsibilities devolving on the police authorities in maintaining law and order. Gun battles, it is true, are not everyday events, but

BOMB FROM ARMoured CAR KILLS 4 ARABS

Jerusalem, Feb. 5.—Four Arabs were killed and a fifth was wounded by a bomb which was thrown from a Jewish armoured vehicle tonight on the main Gaza-Beersheba road.

They were travelling in a jeep when it skidded and overturned. As they waited by the roadside for help, they were attacked by the Jews, an official statement said.

A British Combined Services Entertainment unit, escorted by British troops, was fired at by Arabs today while travelling to Safad, Palestine's biggest Army cantonment.

The guards returned the fire and there were no casualties.

HOUSE CURFEW

British paratroopers and guardsmen were keeping strict watch today in the Sea of Galilee area of Palestine, near the Syrian border, where British troops yesterday fought a large force of infiltrating Arabs.

A house curfew, imposed by the local British commander, came into effect at eight o'clock local time this morning in the Tiberias area, where the Arabs—believed to be 150 strong—were reported to have crossed from Syria.

The Arabs, engaged by troops and Palestine police reinforcements as they were attacking traffic on the Tiberias road, withdrew after a three-hour battle.

Jerusalem reports said 12 Arabs were killed, but there were no British casualties.

A British soldier was killed and three wounded when an Army convoy fought its way under heavy fire through three road blocks on the Jerusalem-Hebron road, believed to have been manned by Arabs.

Saboteurs last night struck at Palestine's railway communications, destroying important sections of the two chief railway lines. A section

of the track was torn up south of Haifa and the Jaffa-Jerusalem line damaged in several places.

TELEPHONES SABOTAGED

Telephone and teleprinter lines between Jerusalem and the all-Jewish city of Tel-Aviv went dead late last night, and Jewish sources reported they had been sabotaged.

Mr. David Ben Gurion, head of the Jewish Agency Executive, warned in Tel-Aviv that if the United Nations did not support the creation of a Jewish militia, the Jews would "use themselves anyhow."

The British authorities had so far refused to discuss with the Jewish Agency any problems likely to arise before the end of the British mandate, he declared.

The United Nations Palestine Commission has accepted a British offer of the use of Aqir Airfield, about 15 miles from Jerusalem, when it begins its investigations in Palestine, a Reuter despatch from Lake Success reported.—Reuter.

MARTIAL LAW

Jerusalem, Feb. 5.—The British today declared limited martial law in northern Palestine in the wake of the Jewish demand that the United Nations approve the formation of a Jewish militia to guard the entire Holy Land, including Arab areas.

Under the new decrees residents of the Tiberias area around the Sea of Galilee are prohibited from leaving their homes.

The restrictions were clamped down only a few hours after the new Arab invasion of North Palestine yesterday near Hesse Pina, seven miles north of the Sea of Galilee on the Palestine-Syrian border.—United Press.

MAY MARRIAGE FOR MICHAEL

Copenhagen, Feb. 5.—Prince Rene of Bourbon-Parma said today his daughter Anne probably would marry former King Michael of Rumania here in May. Both the young persons are now in Switzerland.—Associated Press.

Important Shanghai Airport Development Scheme

Shanghai, Feb. 5.—A construction programme designed to make Shanghai one of the major aviation centres of the Far East is under the direction of the government Bureau of Civil Aeronautical Affairs.

The two major phases of the programme are the construction of a control station here to be used as the centre of a nationwide air communications network, and the erection of an international terminal building to be used by both domestic and foreign airlines operating in and out of Shanghai.

Mr. Tai Ai-kuo, director of the bureau, pointed to work already completed or started, which will play an additional role in making Shanghai an international air centre.

A 6,000-foot north-south runway has been completed and in use at Langhwa airport, and a new night landing lighting system was completed the first of the year. The new system added materially to Shang-

hai's facilities, as previously no night landings or take-offs were permitted, and planes in transit delayed by weather or other causes who could not make their sunrise to sundown deadline, were forced to lay over at intermediate points enroute from Japan, the Philippines or other places. Now traffic at Langhwa is on a 24-hour basis.

Langhwa's radio communications system has been integrated with Tokyo, Guam, Manila, Saigon, Bangkok and other cities.

Another step forward in civil aviation, Mr. Tai said, was an agreement between the Ministries of Communications, Foreign Affairs and National Defence, by which the civil bureau will have jurisdiction over all foreign planes entering China.

Mr. Tai also pointed to improvements now under way at Hankow, Amoy, Tientsin, Foochow and Canton, as other evidences of nationwide progress being made to raise China's international aviation rating.—United Press.

STOP PRESS

Macao-H.K. Ship On Fire

A fire which broke out in the engine room of the Psin Kung So while the steamer was on her way from Macao to Hongkong this morning, later spread to the No. 1 hold, and in response to an appeal the Hongkong Fire Brigade despatched a fire float at 10.30 a.m.

According to meagre reports so far received from the steamer, the fire broke out while the ship was off Lantau.

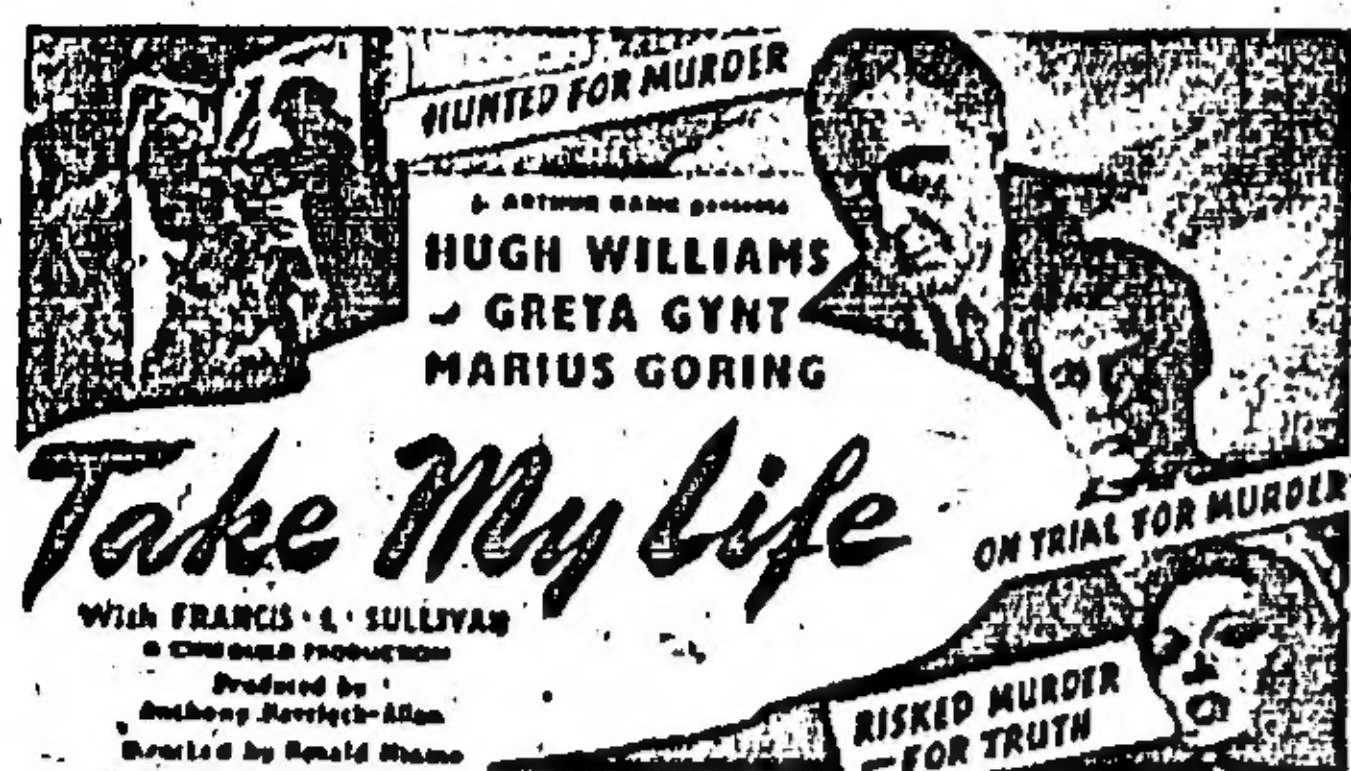
One hundred and forty passengers were aboard, but they have all been safely disembarked.

The ship is reported to be out of control.

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THE BLOW FATE STRUCK AT SIR FELIX POLE

By BERNARD HARRIS

THROUGH fields near a melow country house three miles from Reading trains of the British Railways speed along towards the West Country. Occasionally an engine will give a shrill blast on its whistle.

For the driver will remember that those fields and that country house belong to a man who was once his chief.

And nationalisation has not yet effaced the wish to give him a salute.

The owner of the fields hears the whistle and the rumble of the trains. But he can no longer see them.

SIX OPERATIONS

He knows all the complex details involved in the transfer of the railways to the State. But he has never seen the Transport Bill nor read a line of the Parliamentary debates which led up to the great takeover.

For Sir Felix Pole, youngest general manager ever to be installed at Paddington, has gone blind. He cannot even distinguish day from night.

His sight began to fall three Christmas ago. First there was a burst blood vessel, then a detached retina. Three operations were attempted.

Then a cataract formed. That meant three more operations. They were not successful.

In his study, lined with books about railways, Sir Felix told me that the chances of recovering his sight are "pretty slim."

His "eyes" now are his nurse and his secretary. With their aid he keeps so closely in touch with affairs that he has been asked to remain a director of six big enterprises, controlling many millions of capital.

In 1929 Sir Felix started the business world by abandoning what was thought to be his only love—the G.W.R.—to become chairman of Associated Electrical Industries, by far our biggest group of electrical companies.

When his eyes started to go wrong he resigned the chairmanship but continued as a director. When blindness overtook him, he offered to resign from the board.

The new chairman, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, and his colleagues would have none of it. They valued Sir Felix, though sightless, so highly that they urged him to stay.

EXPERIENCE COUNTS

Of British Thomson-Houston, one of A.E.I.'s chief subsidiaries, Sir Felix is still chairman.

He helps also to guide the affairs of a large dredging company, the docks at Milford Haven, and an enterprise engaged in electrical contracting. He is a director, too, of the company owning the airfields at Gatwick and Gravesend.

"Even when you are sightless," he says, "experience still counts for something—for a few years, anyway."

Son-of-a-Wiltshire schoolmaster, he started as a 14-year-old clerk in the G.W.R. telegraph department at Swindon.

In the archives at Paddington there still rests the testimonial he brought with him from the local vicar in 1891—"Give this lad a chance and he will soon make his mark."

The new boy earned promotion faster than anyone before him. Within 30 years of handing in the testimonial he had gone as far as he could go—he was general manager. But Sir Felix was ambitious. He had his eye on the directorate.

He knew that seats on the G.W.R. board were, hared, to full-time executives of the company, but he hoped that a few years as head of a large commercial concern might be followed by an invitation to become G.W.R. director.

So when he was offered the chairmanship of Associated Electrical Industries he accepted it.

Sir Felix found Associated Electrical a group of compelling concerns, unco-operative and financially not very strong.

He handed it over to his successor a closely knit organisation, with what he calls the "A.E.I. spirit" running through all its parts, and with reserves of many millions of pounds.

The final stage of that consolidation cost him his sight. During the intricate negotiations his eyes started to give trouble. He ought to have gone to bed for some months. But he insisted on completing the job.

His business experience has given Sir Felix no good cause to enviously travel now that the railways have come under the sway of the bureaucrats.

But he is not optimistic about our chances of cheap and comfortable travel now that the railways have come under the sway of the bureaucrats.

But he thinks nationalisation was inevitable. The idea had been talked about from the very beginning of railways.

WHERE THEY FAILED

After allowing for the results of years of war, he believes that State ownership was hastened by failure of the railways to take full advantage of the 1921 grouping.

They could, for example, have centralised manufacture of locomotives and rolling stock and cut out a great deal of costly competitive designing.

Similarly with competing lines, Sir Felix was anxious for example, to put Swansea on the main line by connecting the old Port Talbot railway with the L.M.S., but he failed to persuade the L.M.S. to give up its line to Swansea.

Also, more might have been done in co-ordinating road and rail services.

"The railways blundered and blundered over road transport," he said. "Bus companies, which were partly owned by the railways, used the station yards, but in my experience they seldom connected with the trains."

"And the differences in road and rail fares for identical journeys were inexplicable."

A GOOD TEAM

If State ownership is to be a success, Sir Felix thinks the Transport Board must avoid the at all costs the mistake of having excessive centralisation.

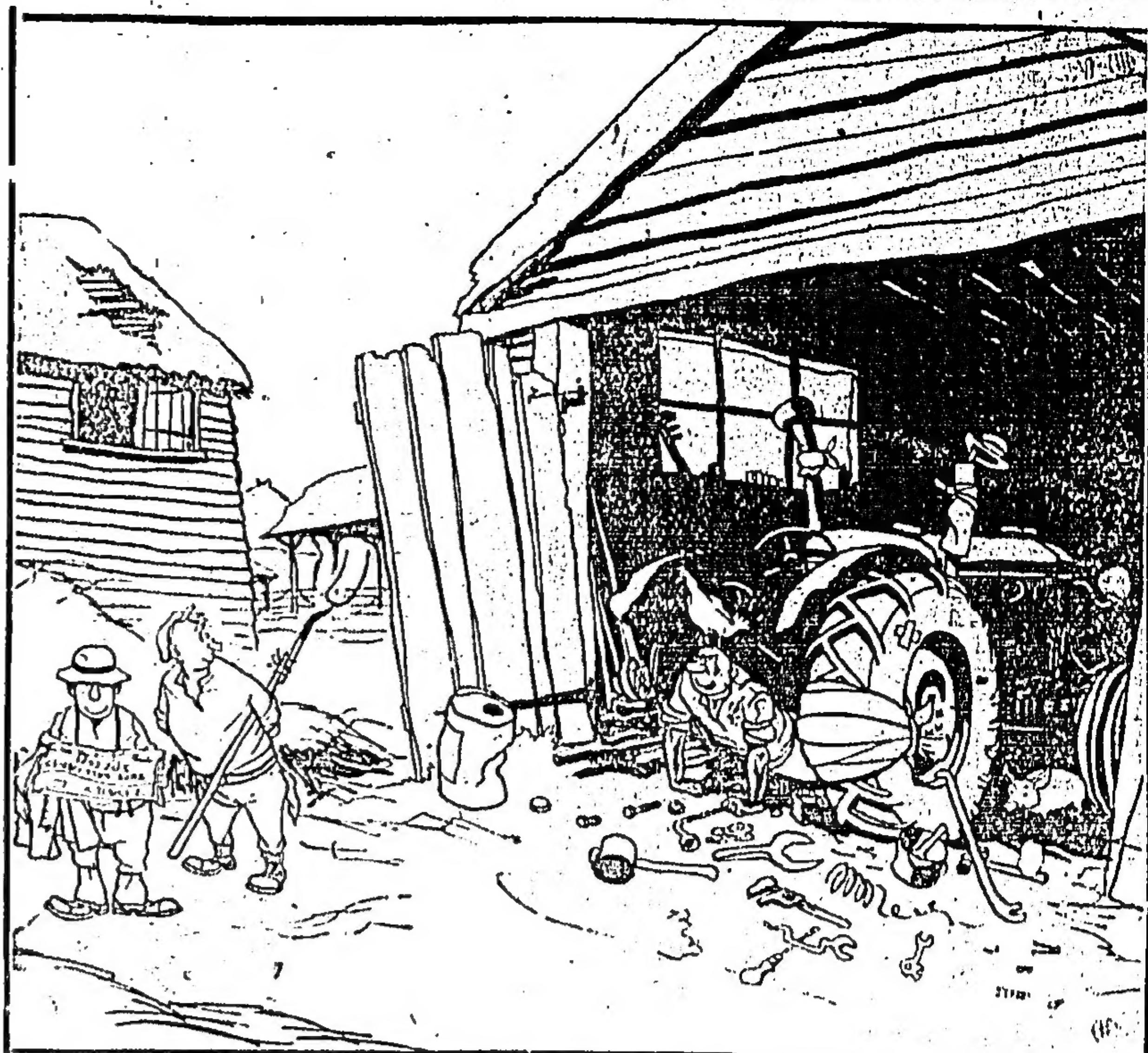
"No company will work properly unless you get the proper spirit running through it," he says. "So it is with a State enterprise."

"Sir Cyril Hurcomb, head-of-the-Transport Commission, starts with a good team. If he can fire their enthusiasm he should do well. I have every confidence in his ability."

But the name given to the new set-up irritates Sir Felix.

"Why British Railways with an 'g'?" he asks. "When we absorbed other companies in 1921 we didn't call ourselves the Great Western Railways."

"The right name now is the British State Railway. And it's sheer nonsense to operate under such monthfuls as 'Railway Executive Committee (Western Region).'"



"When you've finished discussing all this lovely machinery we're going to have in a few years' time, could you fetch me another piece of string?"

Light Blues vote 5 to 1 'Reds are a menace'

By 566 votes to 112 Cambridge Union Debating Society last month carried the motion "That Communism presents the greatest contemporary menace to British liberty." Main speakers were Communist Harry Pollitt and Tory M.P. Henry Strauss. As a commentary on their discussion TREVOR EVANS now adds this estimate of the Communist Party in Britain.

READING through the report of the debate as it came from Cambridge, one thing was very clear: Communism is a topic on which it is not easy to be impartial.

In a debate of violent attack and counter-attack there seems to be one point which was not adequately developed.

Yet it is the major paradox about British Communism today.

1. Both the membership of the Communist Party and its political influence are on the wane.

Some say the party has never been so ineffectual politically. I think that is an exaggeration. It was pretty low between 1939 and 1941.

2. The industrial influence of the Communists has probably never been potentially more disturbing.

Communists, and those who support them unwaveringly though not formal members of

the party, have never held more key jobs in the trade unions than they do today. And that in spite of Jim Hammond's defeat as president of the Lancashire miners.

What is the difference between a Communist politically and in industry?

Difference of degree

IT is a difference of degree. A Communist on the political platform urges the overthrow of the present Constitution. A Communist in trade union office is not for ever preaching revolution, or even acting the prelude to one.

He tempers his handling of trade union affairs because he is a Communist. But he still does his job as a militant trade union leader. That is why he was elected. Not because he is a Communist.

Arthur Horner is an example. He is one of the three greatest miners' leaders of this century. There have never been more than 16,000 Communists at any one time among our miners. Yet Communist Arthur Horner secured nearly 60 percent of the votes when he became general secretary.

It would be wrong to claim that because Mr. Horner was elected the majority of the miners who voted for him were Communists. He got in because of his negotiating record—and in spite of his Communism.

Figures mislead

NO one in Britain knows exactly how many Communist supporters there are in any one of the major unions. The Horner example indicates how misleading are election results.

The best informed experts in the trade union movement estimate that among the miners, the Communists hold 20 percent of the paid offices. Among the engineers, builders, and electrical workers they hold 15 percent of the elected offices.

It is slightly less among the railwaymen, and below 10 percent in the transport workers, general workers, and tailors. The "Communists" have made no appreciable impact on the textile operatives and agricultural workers.

That is a general picture of the successes gained. It is reasonable to deduce that the proportion of Communists, members and sympathisers, in the rank and file membership of these unions is even smaller.

If this be so why all the fuss?

Here is a story which may explain. In the early months of 1941, Lord Swinton, then head of one of the most important security committees, sent for me. He showed me the results of an investigation into all the strikes in Britain's war plants which had taken place in the first 18 months of the war.

A high proportion of these strikes had taken place in factories in which one or other of five men had been employed. The last of the strikes involving these men took place on June 10, 1941. Four days later Russia was attacked.

Two years later there was a sensational strike at one of the greatest war plants in the northwest. The craft-union mainly affected sent one of its organisers up to tell the men to resume work at once. The man sent was one of the five in Lord Swinton's dossier.

That night the organiser recalled that in 20 months he had worked in 15 factories, and added: "We had a stoppage in nine of them."

Basis of policy

THE Government knows these things. Its attitude is reflected in the policy of Transport House. It is based on the memories of yesterday and the fears of tomorrow.

The Communists resent this. They complain when incidents of the early war years are used against them. They say, with justification: "No one has been more zealous than our members in stepping up Britain's production since mid-1941 to this day."

In the recent controversy about the "menace" of the Communists, the general council of the Trades Union Congress, most vulnerable organisation of all, has kept curiously silent.

Why? Because the easiest course would be the most dangerous. Ban Communists from trade unions and you invite the creation of rival organisations.

What, then, can the T.U.C. do? Little more than urge all trade unionists to imitate the energy of the Communists. For it is individual energy and organisation which is the strength of the minority "Red Menace."

BY THE WAY by Beachcomber

THE President of the Louisiana State University, of which I was once Bursar, refused the other day to judge beauty contests because "I learned long ago that every woman is a queen—somebody's queen."

Though not in the best scholastic tradition, and though lacking the dignity of Arnold in his weightier pronouncements, this remark shows the part played by films in education. I like to think that some lonely old spinster in Miami, reading this, sighed as she recalled the penniless boy who called her a swell dish in the drug store one day.

She was his queen.

"And whose queen are you?" inquired the Chairman, as he tapped the bathing beauty's knee with his gavel.

"I didn't come to this banquet to be insulted," replied the beauty with a pout.

"Oh," vouchsafed a history don, "then why did you come?"

"Don't try any funny stuff," shouted the beauties, in chorus, "Get on with the judging."

The Professor of Mathematics paused opposite a small blonde girl. There were tears in his eyes.

"Are you Miss Jells?" he asked. She nodded. "Long ago I knew your mother. She was my queen. She—"

"You make me sick," said the beautiful Miss Jells.

Nothing to do with me

A LETTER to a morning paper begs to draw attention to "certain inaccuracies in the article 'Lost 900 million pounds of margarine'."

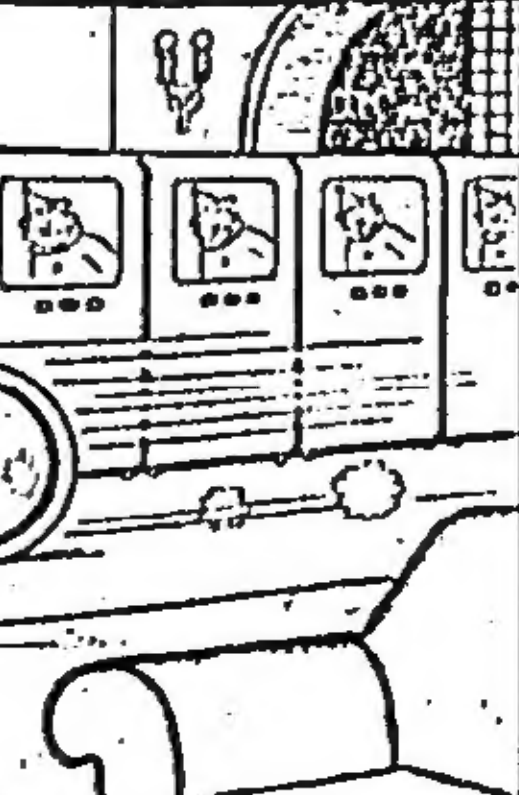
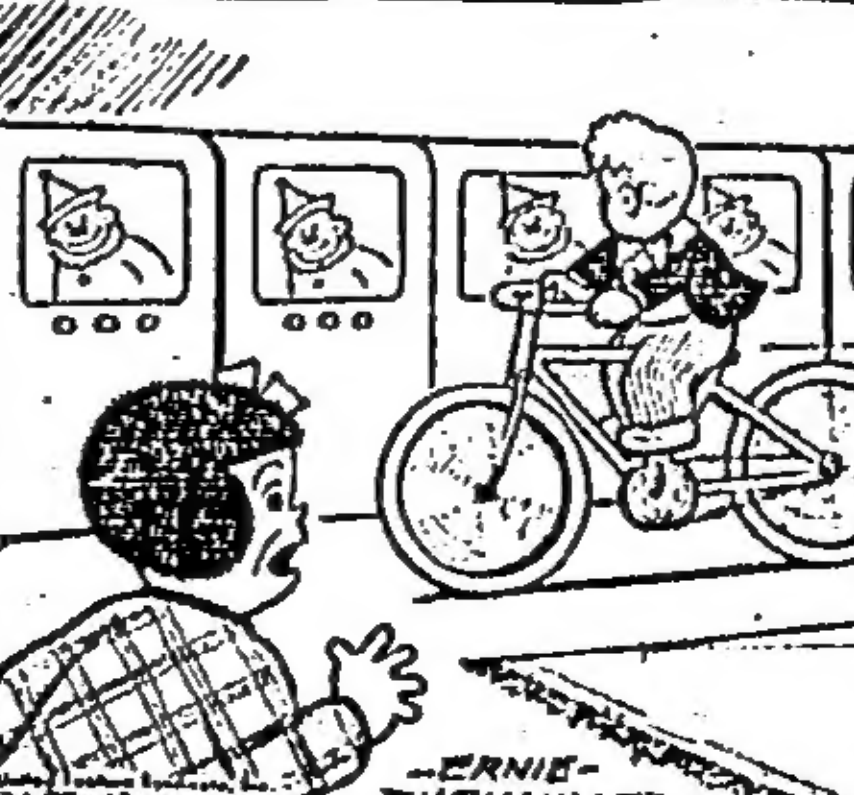
Anybody who could lose nine hundred million pounds of margarine must not only detest the stuff very violently but must be an exceedingly clever person. "To lose such a quantity of margarine is no mere sleight-of-hand," commented Mr Orson Welles when told.

Restaurant piece

THE girl added me three sorry porters in a wet saucer and said the ash is orf so ere's the pom leenoves what went with the alibut but that's orf."

NANCY No End to His Pleasure

By Ernie Bushmiller



BALD SPOTS!

Don't let this happen to you!

START USING

Fitch's

DANDRUFF REMOVER SHAMPOO

& "IDEAL" HAIR TONIC

On Sale at Leading Stores.

SOLE AGENTS: NAN KANG CO. UNHONGKONG

U.S. TO BUILD BIG CARRIER

Washington, Feb. 5.—Navy Secretary Sullivan today disclosed Navy plans for a 60,000 to 80,000 ton aircraft carrier and eight other experimental ships and super-speed submarines.

New construction, which must be approved by Congress, includes four sub-

marines capable of extremely high speed submerged, one "hunter killer" ship for destroying submarines, and the giant aircraft carrier which would be more than twice the size of the Navy's present standard flat-tops. Sullivan said the Navy had asked Congress in its 1949 budget for US\$230,000,000 for the whole shipbuilding programme, which he estimated would take up to five years to complete.—Associated Press.

FAINT SOS MESSAGES

BELIEVED FROM MISSING PLANE

New York, Feb. 5.—Hundreds of amateur radio enthusiasts were still keeping a constant watch today after waiting vainly throughout the night for a renewal of the faint SOS messages, thought to have come from the British airliner, Star Tiger, missing since Friday on a flight from the Azores to Bermuda.

After the search had been abandoned yesterday, faint and distorted radio signals, including the word "Tiger," were picked up from Florida to Newfoundland, and as far inland as Chicago.

American Air Force planes in Bermuda were immediately ordered to stand by, and the United States Federal Communications Commission set up mobile listening units to pinpoint the location of the signals if they were renewed.

The original transmission was thought to come from somewhere in the vast stretch of sea between Bermuda and the Leeward Islands, 1,000 miles to the south.

The possibility of a hoax was not overlooked. The messages were sent on the standard wavelength for plane-to-ground communication.

The Army's Control Centre in New York said it had ordered all planes flying in the area to maintain a sharp lookout.

The Star Tiger, a Tudor-4 machine belonging to the British South American Airways, was carrying 31 people.—Reuter.

RUSSIAN OFFICIALS SACKED

Moscow, Feb. 5.—The dismissal of two high Government officials, including the Minister of Justice, N. M. Rychkov, and a ban on marriages between Russians and foreigners were approved by the Supreme Soviet at its final session today.

The 1948 budget was also approved. Other measures approved included abolition of the death penalty and prescribing of more severe punishment for divulging state secrets.

The Justice Minister was dismissed on the ground that "he could not cope with his work." Rychkov's Ministry has been under fire from the newspapers for several months for not proceeding more efficiently against the laxity in housing and in graft and other offences.

M. B. Khrushchev, chairman of the Arts Committee of the Government, was removed because he did not provide "correct direction of the event" was of extreme significance. The treaty provides that Russia and Rumania will give each other military aid if either is drawn into military operations against Germany or any State allied with Germany in a "policy of aggression."—United Press.

Friendship Pact

Moscow, Feb. 5.—The Soviet Government today announced that it had signed a 20-year friendship and mutual aid pact with Rumania, designed to block aggression by Germany or any nation directly or indirectly allied with Germany.

The Foreign Minister (Mr. Vyacheslav Molotov), in a speech at the signing of the treaty, said the event was of extreme significance.—United Press.

CHECK YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Answers
1. South America. 2. Stoicism and endurance. 3. In 1901. 4. Over 50 per cent. 5. The Gulf of Finland. 6. An opera is entirely while an operetta contains dialogue.

AUSSIE GENERAL BENNETT DEFENDS BROOKE-POPHAM

Canberra, Feb. 5.—Lieutenant General Gordon Bennett, the Australian commander who escaped from Malaya after the Japanese victory in 1942, today defended Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, whose despatches on the Malayan campaign were published a fortnight ago.

Writing for the Fortnightly Observer, General Bennett said: "Brooke-Popham was not a showman. On the contrary, he was quiet, retiring and efficient."

"War correspondents criticised him rather severely, due, in my opinion, to the fact that he made no attempt to impress them. Like so many British leaders, he looked on war correspondents as superfluous."

"At press conferences, he gave the impression that he was tired and lacking in virile energy. In fact, he had an excellent grip of his task and worked hard and efficiently, though not spectacularly."

General Bennett said: "The staff of the Commander-in-Chief of the Eastern theatre was very small and unlike other British staffs in World War II, which were extremely cumbersome."

"He had three principal staff officers, one from each of the services. Apart from these, he had practically no staff."

Plane Shortage

"The plane shortage was serious, but more serious still was the quality of our planes in comparison with the efficient and superior Japanese planes."

Writing on the decision to cancel the "Operation Matador" plan to move the 11th Indian Division

France Favours Western Europe Association

London, Feb. 5.—The French Government has replied favourably to the British draft proposal for a joint offer of a Western European association to the three Benelux countries. It was reliably learned tonight.

It is believed Paris has put forward no major modifications to the British draft, which was submitted last week-end.

The way now seems clear for the next step—the despatch of the draft text for consideration by the Benelux Governments.

The recent joint declaration by the three Benelux Premiers suggested that, while accepting in principle the idea of a closer association with Britain and France, they would await receipt of the actual proposal before committing themselves to any definite reply.

Observers here agree that the Benelux reception of what is now the joint Anglo-French draft will depend largely upon the extent to which the Union is given an effective voice in long-term policy decisions affecting the economic future of Germany within the general framework of West European co-operation.

Whether or not this question is specifically covered in the draft, the opportunity for a decision on this point will arise on February 19, when the British, French and American conversations on Germany open in London.—Reuter.

Persia Rejects Soviet Note

Teheran, Feb. 5.—Persia has not only rejected a Soviet note on the alleged activities of the United States military mission here, but counter-accused the Russians of protecting frontier "marauders," it was disclosed tonight when the official text of the Persian reply was made known.

Rejecting the Soviet charges of American interference in Persian affairs, the note disclosed that Persia intended, when the war ended, to buy arms from the Soviet Union, but that proposed prices were not acceptable.

The Americans offered lower prices, so Persia decided to buy from the United States.

The note accused the Soviet Government of having encouraged Azerbaijan's separatist movement against the Persian Government in 1946 and of having given the rebel leaders refuge.

The note ends with an appeal to the Soviet Union to cease to protect "adventurers and marauding elements," whose activities inside Persia, it says, directed against Persia's security.—Reuter.

LIGHTHOUSEMEN STRANDED

Penzance, Feb. 5.—The men in Wolf Rock lighthouse, seven miles from Land's End, have only enough stores left them to last today.

They have not been relieved for 73 days and a helicopter is being prepared at Huddersfield, near Penzance, to drop them food.

A 40-miles per hour gale is raging round the rock and the other lighthousemen due for relief are Bishop's Cleeve, six miles from Saint Mary's, Selby, whose crew have been waiting for 30 days, and Longships Lighthouse, two miles from Land's End, since last Thursday.—Reuter.

forward into Siam to deal with any attempted Japanese landing, General Bennett said this was wise, as the "operation was doomed to failure."

"One division, in size and quality, could not possibly have prevented the landings," General Bennett said. "On December 6, 1941, our air force reported two Japanese convoys. Until it was certain, without doubt, that the fleet was destined for Malaya, Air Chief Marshal Brooke-Popham was unable to attack."

"It was weak, however, to send a single Catalina to shadow the fleet. The plane was probably destroyed. A flight, or at least two planes, may have enabled the news, so urgently needed, to reach the Commander-in-Chief."

Casus Belli

General Bennett continued: "The need for news of the destination of the Japanese fleet was so important that the Commander-in-Chief would have been justified in sending out as powerful a reconnaissance unit with a covering unit as he could spare."

"Had the enemy attacked this unit, casus belli would have arisen at once, possibly some hours before the Japanese intended. Maybe it would have had the effect of warning the United States Fleet in Pearl Harbour."

"Air cover was refused by Phillips (Vice Admiral T. Phillips who went down with the Prince of Wales) small but powerful naval squadron because the northern Malayan aerodromes were untenable or badly damaged."

"A fighter squadron arrived to see the Prince of Wales sinking. If the planes could reach the place where the ships were attacked after the attack, they could have reached there in time to save the ships."

General Bennett disagreed with that section of the report claiming that fighting was under conditions with which the British Empire had very little experience and that the lack of tanks was a serious handicap.

He stated that the Japanese used infiltration methods adopted by the Germans in the early European fighting.

All these methods adopted by the Japanese in Malaya were, at least in part, responsible for the failures in battle," he said.

"Subsequent operations in the Pacific Islands showed little scope for tanks in jungle country. The Japanese tanks in Malaya were easily dealt with."

"The Commander-in-Chief could well have placed at the front of all the reasons for the defeat the lack of preparedness of our Empire for war and the development of the peace years, of a pacifist attitude."

This made a pacifist, passive and destroyed aggressiveness, a trait essential in war leaders.—Reuter.

"The present outlook is that without drastic changes in grain utilisation in both importing and exporting countries, the exportable supplies of bread and coarse grain will fall approximately 10,000,000 tons short of the quantity needed to maintain the 1948 bread rations in the deficit countries during 1947 to 1948."

"The rice exports from the three Far Eastern exporting areas—Burma, Siam and Indo-China—are expected to be about 500,000 tons greater in 1947-1948 than in 1946-1947."

"Exports from other parts of the world are expected to be about the same."

"Since the deficits in the Far East have increased more than the difference in exportable surplus, the overall situation is expected to deteriorate slightly."

"On industry, the report says: 'In those parts of the Far East that were subjected to enemy occupation during the war, industry suffered serious dislocation, if not complete paralysis, while in those other parts which were actively associated in the war effort of the Allies, the industrial equipment was exposed to the strain of incessant intensive use, causing considerable deterioration of the machines that could not be adequately maintained.'"

"War damage to public utilities and wear and tear on what installations and equipment could be kept in use have drastically curtailed the supply of electric power, gas and water in industrial centres in many countries of the region and have accordingly hampered their industrial recovery."

"Recovery has been held back also by the lack of foreign exchange necessary to purchase new, or to replace obsolete, machinery, and by the lack of domestic capital formation."

"Inflation and political unrest are further slowing down reconstruction. 'Finally, the undernourishment of the workers that has resulted from the shortage of food is in no small part responsible for the decline in the industrial output.'"

"The post-war mineral production is below pre-war in practically all devastated countries. The destruction of mining installations and oil refineries, for the restoration or replacement of which the requisite capital and materials are lacking, has, so far, prevented the resumption of oil production in Burma."

"In Indonesia, oil production in 1947 amounted to only five percent of the pre-war output."

"Tin mining in Burma at present is negligible. Production in Malaya is only about 14 percent of the pre-war output; but in Indonesia, where new dredges, ordered during the war, were available, production is delayed by technical obstacles, while silver production has risen slightly above, and coal production well above, the pre-war levels."

"Mineral production in China is only a fraction of what it was before the war and, owing to the dislocation of transport and other disturbances, the ore mined cannot be made readily available for export or to domestic industries in acute need of it."

"In India, great interest is taken in development planning, and the Dominion Government has plans for railway, highway and industrial development. An Advisory Planning Board was created in 1946."

"The government is planning to undertake and operate many large hydro-electric projects, such as the Damodar project, and a large government-owned artificial fertiliser factory is understood to be nearing completion."

"The provincial governments of the Dominion of India also have many plans. Emphasis in all the Indian plans is on industrial and power development, although plans for the development of communications, literacy and hospitals also occupy a prominent place."

"The information relating to India and Pakistan indicates that plans of the Central and provincial governments will involve about £1,250,000,000."

"Electrical development, railways, roads and agriculture account for the greatest expense."

"Also included in the plans is the annual production by 1952 of an additional 3,000,000 tons of food grains."

"The Dominion of Pakistan is in a stronger position agriculturally than the Dominion of India. Further, its jute and tea exports are expected to strengthen its balance of payments position. On the other hand, Pakistan has less than a proportionate share of the sub-continent's industries and coal deposits."

"Although it is too early to determine the main lines of development planning in Pakistan, it is certain that the development of hydro-electricity will play a crucial part."

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"It isn't the 20-year sentence they gave you—I don't mind that. It's the idea of losing my first big case."

Report On Far East Economic Position

Lake Success, Feb. 5.—On the balance, it appears that food production in the Far East may be approximately the same this year as last, but the continuing population increase is such that the production per person will probably be lower, says a report prepared by the United Nations Department of Economic Affairs.

Production in India and Pakistan, the report says, has suffered not only from adverse weather but even more seriously from civil strife and very heavy imports will be required if an acute deterioration in the food situation in these countries is to be prevented.

The report says: "The production of wheat in India and Pakistan is about 750,000 tons under the previous year, and the production of rice is about 2,500,000 tons lower."

"It is doubtful if the entire decrease in rice production can be offset by increased rice imports; with grain declining in wheat production, well, India will need to import a minimum of 2,000,000 tons more bread grain than during the previous year to maintain the present low cereal consumption."

"Other deficit bread grain areas of the world, taken as a whole, may be able to maintain consumption levels with slightly smaller imports than they had last year."

"But the present levels are extremely low in some of these countries, especially in the Far East."

"Rice exports from the three Far Eastern exporting areas—Burma, Siam and Indo-China—are expected to be about 500,000 tons greater in 1947-1948 than in 1946-1947."

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Korea Commission To See Little Assembly

Seoul, Feb. 5.—As a result of the thorough expose of political conditions in South Korea by Australia's S. H. Jackson, it is believed to be a foregone conclusion that the United Nations Commission will vote tomorrow to send a delegation to the United Nations Little Assembly in South Korea.

The delegation will ask the Little Assembly two questions. Firstly, in view of the current state of affairs, can the Commission upset the National Government Assembly; and secondly, assuming there is in existence a free atmosphere, does the Assembly want the Commission to hold elections in South Korea.

The Commission spokesman said Mr Jackson expressed the view that Korean public opinion demands that some kind of election be held, but not without certain radical alterations in the South Korean police system and not without first securing authority from the United Nations.

He added that although the question, which will be voted tomorrow, as to whether a delegation will be sent to the Little Assembly is "technically open," there is "little doubt" it will be decided affirmatively.

The spokesman said the Commission has set an unofficial deadline of May 1 for the possible election.—United Press.

He added that although the question, which will be voted tomorrow, as to whether a delegation will be sent to the Little Assembly is "technically open," there is "little doubt" it will be decided affirmatively.

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They Answered the Call

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Send your donation to the

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Hon. Treasurers